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ABSTRACT

To achieve the many goals set forth for school libraries, quality libraries containing a variety of printed and visual materials are needed. For example, because there are many differences among individual students, a variety of books at different reading levels and on different topics should be available, and librarians should employ various means of encouraging learner interest in reading. In addition, a wide selection of concrete, semi-concrete, and abstract learning materials should be available to appeal to students' diverse learning styles. Not only should these materials meet the needs of the students, but librarians should also develop a personal philosophy of helping learners to achieve. Moreover, libraries should have facilities that benefit individuals optimally, including a quiet environment for students using reading materials, a display area where students may discuss their observations with others, and conference rooms for committee work involving students. In addition, criteria for obtaining appropriate library materials should be established, and library materials and services should be continually evaluated. Finally, librarians should be well versed in the diverse psychologies of teaching and learning emphasized in the school curriculum. A five-item bibliography is provided. (Author/KM)

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Using the School Library

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Running head: USING SCHOOL LIBRARY

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Using the School Library

Students in the public schools need to learn to utilize resources in the library. Resources in a library may be utilized for personal enjoyment by the learner. The resources can also be used to solve personal and social problems. Bibliotherapy is a valuable concept in library usage. Through bibliotherapy, students may gain greater insight into their own lives and accept limitations possessed. Library books and other materials in a library may assist students to free themselves momentarily from anxieties and tensions. Developing and maintaining quality mental health is highly important for all. Library resources may also provide information on career awareness and exploration. Vicarious learning may save students from experiencing the undesirable. Library resources can aid students to experience the real world vicariously, and minimize selected undesirable experiences. To achieve the above named broadly stated goals, a quality library containing a variety of materials, printed and visual, need to be in evidence.

The Library and Individual Differences

Students differ from each other in many ways. These differences include capacity, interest, purpose, and achievement. Individual differences need adequate provision. Which reference sources should be in evidence in a quality library?

Library and trade books written on different levels of reading

achievement are important. Students individually read at different levels of achievement. Thus, a library should house an ample supply of library/trade books possessing diverse levels of complexity. Each student must be able to locate a library/trade book on his/her reading level. Selecting a book on one's reading level indicates that meaningful comprehension of content is possible. Library/trade books must also emphasize a variety of topics. Students differ from each other in terms of interests possessed in pursuing an area of interest in selecting and reading sequential books in the library.

Methods of encouraging learner interest in reading need to be present. Bulletin board displays which appeal to students and stimulate good reading habits are a must in the library. Contents on these displays need to be changed frequently. An inward desire to read on the part of students should be an end result or objective of the bulletin boards. Librarians should be knowledgeable of student literature. They need to assist students to choose appropriate reading materials. Being able to suggest titles of books to students is vital. An enthusiastic librarian may certainly encourage learners to become greater consumers of literature. When students are pursuing problem areas or term papers, a helpful librarian can do much to assist students to locate significant related books.

For young pupils, a librarian should read books orally to these learners. A pleasant, enthusiastic voice in reading is important

here. Illustrations in the book being read need to be shared with the young listeners. Eye-contact with these pupils as the oral reading progresses guides learners to feel important and wanted. Students of all ages wish to be accepted and have status. Ignoring requests for assistance from students presents a negative image for the librarian. Minimizing students' needs in utilizing the library emphasizes further weaknesses in services provided by an important institution in society.

The Library, an Instructional Materials Center

A variety of kinds of materials for learning should be available in the library. Students have diverse learning styles. Concrete, semi-concrete, and abstract materials represent a classification system of the kinds of materials needed in a library.

With concrete materials, attractively displayed for all to see, students may learn from objects and models. These materials can be housed in display cases. An explanation of each object and model needs to be typed on a card. Librarians should be available to offer additional information as requested by students.

Semi-concrete materials should be abundant. Quality pictures, study prints, maps, globes, charts, software, slides, filmstrips, films, video-tapes, and video discs may provide needed subject matter for students. These semi-concrete materials need to be available to students as needed to secure necessary information. Librarians

must be knowledgeable on audio-visual aids available to guide student usage of these materials. Appropriate places to use each audio-visual aid should also be in evidence. Comfortable furniture for student use to optimize learning must be an end result in utilizing the diverse materials housed in a library.

Abstract materials need to be abundant. Several sets of encyclopedias of recent copyright are a must. The encyclopedias are written for students. General encyclopedias, as well as special subject areas (such as science encyclopedias) need to be in the offing. Reputable daily newspapers and weekly newsmagazines should be conveniently accessible in quality libraries. Pamphlets, brochures, and other printed materials add to the quantity of abstract materials in a library. Librarians need to introduce students to and assist them in finding needed materials.

Materials available in a library should meet the needs of students. Librarians must develop a personal philosophy of helping learners to achieve optimally. They need to guide students to locate and use materials in problem solving situations. A philosophy of service on the part of librarians emphasizes to be available as the need arises to assist students. Students need to feel welcome to come to the librarian to receive guidance and direction in finding and utilizing needed materials. A friendly, pleasant librarian within stimulating facilities for students should encourage learners to

use concrete, semi-concrete, as well as abstract materials in ongoing lessons and units of study.

Criteria for Library Use

Libraries exist for the purpose of using their facilities to benefit individuals optimally. The materials are there for use by consumers to achieve a variety of purposes. Normal wear on materials in a library is to be expected. Libraries must be utilized effectively. The hours in which the library is open should benefit its patrons. A major goal of the library should be to encourage its use by students, faculty members, as well as administrators.

A quiet environment is necessary for those who are utilizing reading materials. The noise level needs to be such that students may comprehend ideas well. People who visit and disrupt the reading area hinder individuals from attaining worthwhile goals. Reading activities demand a quiet environment whereby the reader can accomplish diverse purposes in comprehending content. Librarians providing needed assistance to locate reading materials for students should do this in a manner which does not hinder the goals of those involved in reading.

Objects and models on display should be placed in an area whereby students may discuss their observations with others. Students need to attain worthwhile learnings from these items. With discussions among students, higher levels of cognition may be an end result.

Learners can gain valuable ideas from these interactions. Objects and models should be changed at intervals to encourage student observations and discussions. A library should be a fascinating place to be, filled with materials of interest to learners.

Conference rooms need to be available. The conference rooms are for committee work involving students. Here, learners may compile their research on a problem area cooperatively. Story telling and the oral reading of library books to young students may occur in a conference room.

A librarian may meet with a group of learners in a conference room to explain the use of the library. After these explanations, the librarian can show students where the materials are located. This must be done in a manner which does not disturb those who are reading quietly in this designated area.

Classroom teachers will also wish to meet with students in a conference room in the library. For example, if a committee is doing research on a problem area, the teacher needs to consult with these students to determine progress. The conference needs to be held where the reference sources are located in the library. The teacher is then better able to assist students to find needed information close to where the materials are housed in the library.

Administrators and the school board need to support financially and emotionally the services and materials in the library. The library

is a place to learn. It is a special area whereby students and school employees can go to secure needed printed materials and audio-visual aids. The library may aid individuals in getting materials to solve problems. It may also be a place to go to engage in sheer recreational reading. The goals and philosophy of any library should stress self actualization of the person. Each needs to realize his/her optimal level of achievement. Optimal progress may come in terms of understandings (gaining facts, concepts, and generalizations), skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), as well as attitudes (feelings, interests, values, and appreciations).

Negative philosophies involving use of the library are

1. limited time in which students and school personnel can use its facilities.
2. meager number of materials available to consumers.
3. unfriendly, impolite services provided in library use.
4. cleanliness and neatness take the place of the actual utilization of concrete, semi-concrete, and abstract materials.
5. its unimportance in being properly funded.

The Use and Location of Reference Materials

Definite criteria need to be established in securing materials for a library. Too frequently, these materials have been obtained in a haphazard manner. A systematic procedure has not been utilized. A minimal use of the library may follow. Learners then lack enthusiasm

in using many of the concrete, semi-concrete, and abstract materials housed in the library.

Criteria for obtaining materials in the library may well be the following:

1. the goals of instruction need to be achieved in diverse curriculum in the school.
2. a love for learning on the part of the students should be in the offing.
3. useful materials which are practical and have utilitarian values in the lives of students should be in the offing.
4. sheer enjoyment and appreciation of library materials is important.
5. a desire to develop and maintain a quality library represents the wants of learners.
6. input from students in terms of materials wanted for the library can make for intrinsic motivation on the part of students for library usage.
7. students need to assist in the operation of a well designed program for library usage.
8. materials are purchased for use by students and not for storage alone, in the library.
9. methods to encourage consumer use of the library are important.
10. ease of checking out and returning materials is important in the operation of the library.

Numerous librarians and educators have stated what is necessary to have in a quality library. Jarolimek[1] recommends the following reference sources:

Books

Textbooks
Supplementary reading books
Picture books
Biographies
Historical fiction

Special references

Encyclopedias
Maps and globes
Atlases
Dictionaries
World Almanac
Charts and graphs
Yearbooks
Legislative Manuals
Who's Who in America
Junior Book of Authors
Statesman's Yearbook
Computers

Reference Aids

Card catalog
The Reader's Guide
Bibliographies
COMCATS

Miscellaneous Materials

Advertisements
Magazines and periodicals
Recipes
City and telephone directories
Labels
Guidebooks and tour books
Letters and diaries
Travel folders
Postcards
Newspapers and news clippings
Comic books
Pictures
Schedules and timetables
Pamphlets and booklets (such as those from the information services of foreign countries, superintendent of documents, conservation departments, historical societies, art galleries)
Weather reports
Manufacturers' guarantees and warranties
Money, checks, coupons for premiums, receipts
Reviews, government documents

Reference sources in a library should never remain stable nor static. Continuous evaluation of materials and services provided in a library needs to be in evidence. If a library does not increase its

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[1]John Jarolimek. Social Studies in Elementary Education. Seventh edition. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1986, pages 251-252.

quality holdings, stagnation certainly will set in. Also, if services provided by a librarian do not change as new needs arise, a lack of improvement in its endeavors will hamper learner progress. Teachers, administrators, and librarians need to develop and maintain a library which will assist optimal achievement on the part of consumers.

Psychology of Library Services

Two major schools of thought in psychology pertaining to library services provided, as well as use made of its materials, will be discussed.

Behaviorism, as a pschology of learning, is highly prevalent with state mandated objectives, as well as local instructional management systems (IMS). To assist students to attain precise objectives, the librarian can provide useful services in guiding learners to secure needed materials. These materials should assist students to attain objectives. The librarian must be familiar with and knowledgeable about the psychology of behaviorism. Thus, the librarian is in a good position to provide needed services to students. The reference sources provided by the librarian assist students to attain the stated, precise objectives.

As a second school of psychology in education, humanism has much to offer. Humanists, such as Carl Rogers, Donald Snygg, and A. H. Maslow advocate that students should be heavily involved in developing the curriculum. Several approaches may be utilized here.

The teacher with his/her students may plan cooperatively what the latter are to learn in an ongoing unit of study. The emphasis is upon cooperation of students and the teacher planning objectives, learning activities, and appraisal procedures. A second procedure, using humanism as a psychology of learning, stresses a learning centers philosophy. An ample number of tasks at different learning centers needs to be available so that each learner may select what to complete and what to omit. Each student needs to be guided to be profitably occupied in sequential learning opportunities. A humane curriculum is in the offing if students have input in terms of which tasks to pursue and which to omit. A third method emphasizing humanism could have the teacher list ten tasks (as an example) on the chalkboard. Students would be required to complete any four of the ten. This permits leeway for any learner to select what he/she deems desirable to complete and which to omit. A student could complete more than the four required tasks. Humanists advocate a wide variety of stimulating materials be utilized in an ongoing unit of study. Thus, at the different learning centers in a classroom, an abundance of concrete, semi-concrete, and abstract materials need to be in the offing. The librarian may certainly assist the teacher much in securing materials suitable for students at the different learning centers.

In Summary

A quality library is of utmost importance to learners in the curriculum. Definite criteria need to be met in library materials and services provided to consumers. The criteria include

1. providing for individual differences among learners.
2. having a variety of concrete, semi-concrete, and abstract materials.
3. making the materials and services available to those who utilize the library.
4. providing for library use to individuals who possess diverse purposes and objectives.
5. emphasizing selected reputable psychologies of instruction in library usage, such as behaviorism and humanism.

Seating arrangements and furniture in a library need to be comfortable, useful, and purposeful. The major objective of libraries is to assist learners to achieve optimally emphasizing a variety of objectives.

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